

**WASHINGTON STATE
WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD
MEETING NO. 203
JULY 22, 2016**

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL PLAN APPROVAL

On December 14, 2015, the Workforce Board adopted guidelines for use by the local Workforce Development Councils (WDCs) in the development of new local plans. Their new plans become the strategic plans for each local workforce development area, and must align with *Talent and Prosperity for All*, the state's strategic plan under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014.

The 12 WDCs worked with their chief local elected officials and community partners to develop their 2016-2020 Local Strategic Workforce plans during the ensuing months. Their draft plans were released for public comment and state staff review on May 2, 2016.

In May, Workforce Board staff convened a review team with representatives from the core programs and TANF, who provided their program expertise to the review. The draft plans were reviewed for consistency with the guidelines and alignment with the state's plan, *Talent and Prosperity for All*.

During a special June 22 meeting the Board considered a recommendation to give final approval to eight revised WDC plans and provisional approval to the four WDCs still working to incorporate changes to their plans. Following discussion, the Board voted to provisionally approve all 12 plans. The decision was made following discussion about the anticipated notification from federal agencies on whether the state's strategic plan had been approved, the release of final federal regulations, as well as a discussion about the submitted plan revisions. The Board further directed state staff to reconvene the review team to consider additional plan revisions and to recommend an appropriate path forward.

The review committee met on July 11, following further consideration of the revised plans. The committee recognized that the WDCs have devoted a great deal of effort to embrace the principles of the new federal workforce act, WIOA. These efforts are evident in the WDCs' extensive outreach, communication, and solicitation of new and innovative practices that have occurred across a diverse group of stakeholders. The review team recognized that, similar to the state agencies, the local areas are just now beginning to implement the required operational elements of WIOA. The team emphasized the importance of conducting thorough assessments of current programs, the service needs of the 14 populations with barriers, and key WIOA changes, and then using this analysis to identify gaps and to inform policy and service delivery.

The reviewers recognized that local areas need to move ahead with implementation of their plan components, rather than entering a revolving door of plan revisions. However, they also recognized that the new requirements of WIOA require significant re-thinking, restructuring, and a shifting of system and partner expectations in the initial phase of implementation. These

critical operational aspects have not been mapped out completely by any entity yet, but will develop through relationships, partnering, and ongoing technical assistance over the next two years to confidently address the following required areas:

1. Integration of partner services and the alignment of resources.
2. Targeted outreach to individuals with barriers and access, emphasizing that “all really does mean all.”
3. Improved services to individuals with disabilities.
4. Improved incorporation of career pathways, as defined by the Act and the state’s policy.

The Act made significant changes in outreach and provision of services as it moved from WIA to WIOA. Washington has the largest number of collaborative partners in the nation under its state plan. This is something that should be reflected in how the local plans are developed and implemented. To fully embrace the spirit of WIOA and the significant shift WIOA makes in outreach and provision of services to businesses and to the 14 populations with barriers to employment, additional work needs to be done. This work needs to be part of the process moving forward. The review team asked for the opportunity to extend an offer to work on the specific areas, individual to each plan. They will do this with a follow-up letter itemizing these aspects and offering specific assistance and to support progress. In order to optimize combined partner support, the intent will be to complete this work before July 1, 2017. WDCs requiring an extended timeline will share that with Board staff. The expectation is that at the time of plan revisions in 2018, these changes will be reflected in the plan submissions.

To that end the review committee requests that all 12 plans be substantially approved, along with recognition of their extensive strategic and operational planning done to this point. This will be the status of all plans through the initial two-year period.

Board Action Requested: Adoption of the recommended motion.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

WHEREAS, Workforce Development Councils have submitted their 2016-2020 Local Strategic Workforce Plans; and

WHEREAS, Staff of the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board convened a team of subject matter experts from the major core programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to provide comprehensive review of the plans; and

WHEREAS, Local plans can be updated as the implementation proceeds, making them relevant planning documents that inform the work of the local areas; and

WHEREAS, State agency partners will avail their expertise to assist with future revisions that bring local plans further in alignment with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the state's "Talent and Prosperity for All" plan.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board approves a letter be sent to the Governor, recommending substantial approval of the plans submitted by the following Workforce Development Councils:

- Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council
- Workforce Southwest Washington
- Northwest Workforce Council
- Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County
- Workforce Central (Pierce County)
- South Central Washington Workforce Development Council
- Eastern Washington Partnership Workforce Development Council
- Spokane Area Workforce Development Council
- Olympic Consortium Workforce Development Council
- Workforce Snohomish
- North Central Workforce Development Council
- Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board requires the 12 Workforce Development Councils to continue to work with state and partner agencies to ensure full integration of partner services and alignment with resources; targeted outreach to all individuals with barriers to employment; measurably improved services to individuals with disabilities; and incorporation of career pathways as defined by the Act and state policy, and will reflect this work in the revisions submitted at the two-year plan review, completed by June 30, 2018, as outlined in the Act.